

ON DOCTRINAL INTOLERANCE CARDINAL PIE

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*One Lord, one faith, one baptism.
There is only one Lord, only one faith, only one baptism.
(Saint Paul to the Ephesians, IV, 5)*

A wise man said that the actions of man are the daughters of his thought, and we ourselves have established that all the goods, like all the evils, of a society are the fruit of the good or bad maxims which it professes. Truth in the mind and virtue in the heart correspond almost inseparably; when the mind is given over to the demon of lies, the heart, if the obsession did not start with it, is very close to giving itself up to the demon of vice. Intelligence and will are two sisters between whom seduction is contagious; if you see that the first has given way to error, throw a veil over the honor of the second.

It is because it is so, MF, it is because there is no attack, no lesion in the intellectual order which does not have disastrous consequences in the moral order and even in the material order, that we attach ourselves to fighting evil in its principle, to drying it up at its source, that is to say in its ideas. A thousand prejudices are accredited among us: sophism, astonished to hear itself attacked, invokes prescription; the paradox prides itself on having acquired the right of citizenship and of the bourgeoisie. The Christians themselves, living in the midst of this impure atmosphere, do not avoid all its contagion; they too easily accept many errors. Tired of resisting on the essential points, often, weary of war, they yield on other points which seem to them less important, and they do not always see, and sometimes they do not want to see how far they could be led by their reckless weakness. Amidst this confusion of ideas and false opinions, it is up to us, priests of the incorruptible truth, to throw ourselves across the board and protest with gesture and voice; fortunate if the rigid inflexibility of our teaching can stop the overflow of falsehood, dethrone erroneous principles which reign superbly in people's minds, correct disastrous axioms which are already authorized by the sanction of time, finally enlighten and purify a society which threatens to sink, as he grows older, into a chaos of darkness and disorder where he would no longer be able to distinguish nature and even less the remedy from

his ailments.

Our century cries out: Tolerance! tolerance ! It is agreed that a priest must be tolerant, that religion must be tolerant. MF, in all things nothing equals frankness; and I come to tell you bluntly that **there exists in the world only one society which possesses the truth, and that this society must necessarily be intolerant**. But, before getting into my subject, to understand each other well, let us distinguish between things, agree on the meaning of the words and confuse nothing.

Tolerance can be either civil or theological; the first is not within our province, I allow myself only a word in this respect. If the law means that it allows all religions because in its eyes they are all equally good, or even because public power is incompetent to take a stand on this matter, the law is impious and atheistic; it no longer professes civil tolerance such as we are about to define it, but dogmatic tolerance, and, by a **criminal neutrality**, it justifies in individuals the most absolute religious indifference. On the contrary, if, recognizing that only one religion is good, it only supports and permits the quiet exercise of others, the law in this, as has been observed before me, may be wise and necessary according to the circumstances. If there are times when it is necessary to say with the famous constable: One faith, one law; there are others where it is necessary to say like Fénelon to the son of Jacques II: "Grant civil tolerance to all, not by approving everything as indifferent, but by suffering with patience what God suffers." But I leave aside this field bristling with difficulties, and, sticking to the specifically religious and theological question, I will expose these two principles: 1. The religion which comes from heaven is truth, and it is intolerant of doctrines.

2. The religion that comes from heaven is charity, and it is full of tolerance towards people.

Let us pray to Mary to come to our aid, and to invoke for us the Spirit of truth and charity: *Spiritus veritatis et pacis*.
Ave Maria.

To condemn the truth to tolerance is to force it to suicide.

I. It is of the essence of all truth not to tolerate the contradictory principle. The affirmation of a thing excludes the negation of this same thing, as light excludes darkness. Where nothing is certain, where nothing is defined, feelings can be shared, opinions can vary. I understand and I ask for freedom in doubtful things: *In dubiis libertas*. But as soon as the truth presents itself with the certain characteristics which distinguish it, by the very fact that it is truth, it is positive, it is necessary, and, consequently, it is one and intolerant: *In necessariis unitas*. To condemn the truth to tolerance is to force it to suicide. Affirmation kills itself if it doubts itself; and it doubts itself if it indifferently allows negation to settle beside it. For the truth, intolerance is the care of conservation, it is the legitimate exercise of the right of property. When one possesses, one must defend, on pain of soon being entirely despoiled.

Also, my brothers, by the very necessity of things, intolerance is everywhere, because everywhere there is good and evil, true and false, order and disorder; everywhere the true does not support the false, the good excludes the evil, the order fights the disorder. What could be more intolerant, for example, than this proposition: 2 and 2 make 4? If you come and tell me that 2 and 2 make 3, or that 2 and 2 make 5, I answer you that 2 and 2 make 4. And if you tell me that you do not dispute my way of counting, but that you keep yours, and that you beg me to be as indulgent towards you as you are towards me; All

by remaining convinced that I am right and that you are wrong, if need be, I will perhaps remain silent, because after all it matters little to me that there is on earth a man for whom 2 and 2 make 3 or 5.

On a certain number of questions, where the truth would be less absolute, where the consequences would be less serious, I could, up to a certain point, come to terms with you. I will be accommodating if you talk to me about literature, politics, art, pleasant sciences, because in all these things there is not a single and determined type. There the beautiful and the true are, more or less, conventions; and, moreover, heresy in this matter incurs no other anathemas than those of common sense and good taste. **But if it is religious truth, taught or revealed by God himself; if your eternal future and the salvation of my soul are at stake, then no more transaction possible.** You will find me unshakable, and I should be. It is the condition of all truth to be intolerant; but religious truth, being the most absolute and most important of all truths, is consequently also the most intolerant and exclusive.

My Brethren, nothing is exclusive like unity. Now, hear the words of Saint Paul: *Unus Dominus, una fides, unum baptisma*. There is only one Lord in heaven: *Unus Dominus*. This God, whose unity is the great attribute, has given the earth only one symbol, one doctrine, one faith: *Una fides*. And this faith, this symbol, he entrusted to only one visible society, to one single Church whose children are marked with the same seal and regenerated by the same grace: *Unum baptisma*. Thus the divine unity, which resides from all eternity in the splendours of glory, was produced on earth by the unity of the evangelical dogma, the deposit of which was given as a warning by Jesus Christ to unity. hierarchical hierarchy of the priesthood: One God, one faith, one Church: *Unus Dominus, una fides, unum baptisma*.

An English pastor had the courage to write a book on the tolerance of Jesus Christ, and the philosopher of Geneva said in speaking of the Savior of men: "I do not see that my divine Master has stolen from dogma." Nothing could be truer, my Brethren: Jesus Christ did not skimp on dogma. He brought the truth to men, and he said: If anyone is not baptized with water and the Holy Spirit; if anyone refuses to eat my flesh and drink my blood, he will have no part in my kingdom. I confess, there is no subtlety there; it is intolerance, the most positive, the most frank exclusion. And again Jesus Christ sent his Apostles to preach to all nations, that is to say, to overthrow all existing religions, to establish the one Christian religion throughout the earth, and to substitute the unity of Catholic dogma for all beliefs held among different peoples. And foreseeing the movements and the divisions that this doctrine will excite on the earth, he is not arrested, and he declares that he has come to **bring not peace but the sword, to ignite war not only between peoples, but in the bosom of the same family, and to separate, as regards convictions at least, the believing wife from the unbelieving husband, the Christian son-in-law from the idolatrous father-in-law.** The thing is true, and the philosopher is right: Jesus Christ did not skimp on dogma.

The same sophist says elsewhere to his Emile: "I do like Saint Paul, and **I place charity far above faith.** I think the essence of religion consists, in practice, that not only must one be a good, humane, and charitable man, but that whoever is truly such, believes in it enough to be saved, whatever religion he professes". There is certainly, my Brethren, a beautiful commentary from Saint Paul who says, for example, that without faith it is impossible to please God; of Saint Paul who declares that Jesus Christ is not divided, that in him there is not yes and no, but only yes; of Saint Paul who affirms that, when by impossible an angel would come to evangelize a doctrine other than the apostolic doctrine, it would be necessary to say anathema to him. Saint Paul, apostle of tolerance! St. Paul walking, overthrowing all proud science that rises up against Jesus Christ, reducing all intelligences to the servitude of Jesus Christ.

We have spoken of the tolerance of the first centuries, of the tolerance of the Apostles. My Brothers, we don't think about it; but the establishment of the Christian religion was, on the contrary, par excellence a **work of religious intolerance.** At the time of the preaching of the Apostles, the whole universe possessed almost this vaunted dogmatic tolerance. As all the religions were as false and as unreasonable as each other, they did not make war on each other; as all the gods were equal to each other, they were so many demons, they were not exclusive, they tolerated each other: Satan is not divided against himself. Rome, by multiplying her conquests, multiplied her divinities; and the study of its mythology was complicated in the same proportion as that of its geography. The conqueror who ascended the Capitol made the conquered gods walk before him with even more pride than he dragged vanquished kings in his train. Most often, by virtue of a senatus-consultum, the idols of the Barbarians were henceforth merged with the domain of the fatherland, and the national Olympus was enlarged like the empire.

Christianity, when it appeared (Mark this, Brethren, these are historical insights of some value to the present question), Christianity, when it first appeared, was not pushed away all at once.

Paganism wondered if, instead of fighting this new religion, it should not give it access to its bosom. Judea had become a Roman province; Rome, accustomed to receiving and reconciling all religions, at first received without too much fear the cult which had come out of Judea. An emperor placed Jesus Christ as well as Abraham among the deities of his oratory, just as another Caesar was later seen offering to pay him solemn homage.

But the word of the prophet had not taken long to be verified: the multitudes of idols, who usually saw new and foreign gods without jealousy come and place themselves beside them, at the arrival of the God of the Christians Suddenly they uttered a cry of terror, and, shaking off their quiet dust, shook themselves on their threatened altars: *Ecce Dominus ascendit, et commovebuntur simulacra a facie ejus*. Rome was attentive to this spectacle. And soon, when it was realized that this new God was the irreconcilable enemy of the other gods; when it was seen that the Christians whose worship had been admitted did not want to admit the worship of the nation; in a word, when the intolerant spirit of the Christian faith had been established, it was then that the persecution began.

Listen to how the historians of the time justify the tortures of Christians: they do not speak ill of their religion, of their God, of their Christ, of their practices; it was only later that calumnies were invented. They reproach them only for **not being able to tolerate any religion other than their own.** "I had no doubt, says Pliny the Younger, what

let it be with their dogma, that their stubbornness and their inflexible obstinacy should not be punished: *Pervicaciam et inflexibilem obstinationem*. They are not criminals, says Tacitus, but they are intolerant, misanthropic, enemies of the human race. There is among them an obstinate faith in their principles, and an exclusive faith which condemns the beliefs of all other peoples: *Apud ipsos fides obstinata, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium*. The pagans said quite generally of the Christians what Celsus said of the Jews, who for a long time were confused with them because the Christian doctrine had originated in Judea: "Let these men adhere inviolably to their laws," said this sophist, I don't blame them; I only blame those who abandon the religion of their fathers to embrace a different one!

But if the Jews or the Christians want to give themselves the air of a more sublime wisdom than that of the rest of the world, I would say that one should not believe that they are more pleasing to God than the others. »

Thus, my Brethren, the main grievance against the Christians was the too absolute rigidity of their symbol, and, as they said, the unsociable humor of their theology. If it had only been one more God, there would have been no complaints; but it was an incompatible God who drove out all the others: that is why the persecution. Thus the establishment of the Church was a work of dogmatic intolerance. **The whole history of the Church is likewise only the history of this intolerance.** What are the martyrs? intolerant in matters of faith, who prefer torture to professing error. What are symbols? formulas of intolerance, which regulate what must be believed and which impose necessary mysteries on reason. What is the Papacy? an institution of doctrinal intolerance, which by hierarchical unity maintains the unity of faith. Why councils? to stop deviations of thought, to condemn false interpretations of dogma, to anathematize propositions contrary to the faith.

We are therefore intolerant, **exclusive in matters of doctrine: we profess it; we are proud of it.** If we were not, it is because we would not have the truth, since the truth is one, and consequently intolerant. Daughter of heaven, the Christian religion, in descending to earth, has produced the titles of its origin; she has offered to the examination of reason incontestable facts, which irrefutably prove her divinity. Now, if it comes from God, if Jesus Christ, its author, could say: I am the truth: *Ego sum veritas*; it is necessary, by an inevitable consequence, that the Christian Church incorruptibly preserve this truth such as she received it from heaven itself; it must push back, exclude everything that is contrary to this truth, everything that would destroy it. To reproach the Catholic Church for its dogmatic intolerance, its absolute affirmation in matters of doctrine, is to address to it a very honorable reproach.

This is to reproach the sentinel with being too faithful and too vigilant; it is to reproach the wife for being too delicate and too exclusive.

We tolerate you well, the sects sometimes say to the Church, so why don't you tolerate us? My Brothers, it is as if the slaves were saying to the legitimate wife: We support you well, why be more exclusive than us? The foreigners support the wife, it is a great favor, really; and the wife is quite unreasonable to claim alone rights and privileges, of which we are willing to leave her a share, at least until we succeed in banishing her altogether!

Look at this intolerance of the Catholics! it is often said around us: they cannot tolerate any other Church than their own; the Protestants suffer them well! MF, you were in quiet possession of your house and estate; armed men rush there; they seize your bed, your table, your money, in a word, they establish themselves in your home, but they don't drive you out, they go so far as to condescend to leave you your share. What have you to complain about? You are very demanding not to be content with common law!

The Protestants say that one can save oneself in your Church; why do you pretend that one **cannot escape into theirs**? MF, let's move to one of the squares in this city. A traveler asks me the road that leads to the capital; I teach it to him. Then one of my fellow citizens approaches and says to me: I admit that this road leads to Paris, I grant you that; but you owe me reciprocal consideration, and you will not dispute that this other road, the road to Bordeaux for example, also leads to Paris.

In truth, this road to Paris would be very intolerant and very exclusive not to want a road which is directly opposite to it to lead to the same goal. She does not have a conciliatory spirit; how far does invasion and fanaticism not creep? MF, and I could give in again, because the most opposite roads would end up meeting perhaps, after having circumnavigated the globe, while we would eternally follow the path of error without ever reaching heaven. Do not ask us any longer why, when Protestants admit that one can save oneself without our religion, we refuse to recognize that, generally speaking and outside the case of good faith and invincible ignorance, one can save oneself in theirs. The thorns can admit that the vine gives grapes, without the vine being required to recognize the same property in the thorns.

MF, we are often confused about what we hear about all these issues from otherwise sensible people. **Logic fails them entirely when it comes to religion.** Is it passion, is it prejudice that blinds them? It's one and the other. Basically, the passions know what they want when they seek to shake the foundations of faith, to place religion among things without consistency. They are not unaware that by demolishing dogma they prepare for themselves an easy morality. We have said it with perfect accuracy: it is rather the decalogue than the symbol that causes incredulity. If all religions can be placed on the same level, it is because they are all equal; if all are true, all are false; if all the gods tolerate each other, it is because there is no God. And when we have been able to get there, there is no longer any very embarrassing morality. How many consciences would be at ease the day when the Catholic Church gave a fraternal kiss to all its rival sects!

The indifference of religions is therefore a system which has its roots in the passions of the human heart. But it must also be said that, for many men of our century, it is due to the prejudices of education. Indeed, either it is a question of these men, already advanced in age, and who have sucked the milk of the preceding generation; or else it is those who belong to the new generation. The former sought the philosophical and religious spirit in Jean-Jacques' *Émile*;

the others, in the eclectic or progressive school of those half-Protestants and half-rationalists who today hold the scepter of education.

Jean-Jacques was among us the apologist and propagator of this system of religious tolerance. The invention does not belong to him, although he audaciously bid on paganism which never pushed indifference so far. Here, with a short commentary, are the main points of the Geneva catechism, which unfortunately has become popular: All religions are good; that is to say, otherwise for French, all religions are bad. One must practice the religion of one's country; that is to say that the truth in religious matters depends on the degree of longitude and latitude: truth on this side of the mountains, falsehood beyond the mountains. Consequently, what is still more serious, one must either have no sincere religion and play **the hypocrite** everywhere, or, if one has a religion at the bottom of one's heart, become **apostate and renegade** when circumstances dictate. want. The wife must profess the same religion as her husband, and the children the same religion as their father; that is to say, what was false and bad before the marriage contract must be true and good afterwards, and that it would be wrong for the children of cannibals to deviate from the estimable practices of their parents!

But I hear you telling me that the century of the Encyclopedia is over, that a longer refutation would be an anachronism. All in good time ; let's close the book of Education. Let us open in its place the scholarly Essays which are like the common source from which the philosophy of the nineteenth century spreads through a thousand faithful channels over the entire surface of our country. This philosophy is called eclectic, syncretic, and, with a small modification, it is also called progressive. This beautiful system consists in saying that there is nothing false; that all opinions and all religions can be reconciled; that error is not possible for man, unless he despoils humanity; that the whole error of men consists in believing that they possess exclusively all the truth, when each of them holds only one link of it and that from the reunion of all these links must be formed the entire chain of truth. So, according to this incredible theory, there are no false religions, but they are **all incomplete without each other**. The true religion would be the religion of syncretic and progressive eclecticism, which would bring together all the others, past, present and to come: all the others, that is to say, the natural religion which recognizes a God; atheism which knows none, pantheism which recognizes it in everything and everywhere; spiritualism which believes in the soul, and materialism which believes only in flesh, blood and humors; the evangelical societies which admit a revelation, and the rationalist deism which rejects it; Christianity which believes the Messiah has come, and Judaism which still awaits him; Catholicism which obeys the pope; and Protestantism which regards the pope as antichrist. All this is reconcilable; they are different aspects of the truth. **From all of these cults will result a larger, more vast cult, the truly Catholic, that is to say universal, great cult, since it will contain all the others within its bosom.**

MF, this doctrine, which you have all described as **absurd**, is not of my creation; it fills thousands of volumes and recent publications; and, without its substance ever varying, it takes new forms every day under the pen and on the lips of the men in whose hands the destinies of France rest.

"How crazy **have** we gotten to?"

– We have arrived, MF, where must logically come whoever does not admit this incontestable principle which we have established, namely: that the **truth is one, and consequently intolerant, exclusive of all doctrine which is not the his**. And, to sum up in a few words all the substance of this first part of my discourse, I will say to you: **You were looking for the truth on earth, look for the intolerant Church**. All errors can be mutual concessions; they are close relatives, since they have a common father: *Vos ex patre diabolo estis*.

Truth, daughter of heaven, is the only one that does not capitulate.

O you, then, who wish to judge this great cause, appropriate to yourselves in this the wisdom of Solomon. Among these different societies between which the truth is an object of dispute, as was this child between the two mothers, you want to know to whom to adjudicate it. Say that a sword is brought to you, pretend to cut, and examine the face that the suitors will make. There will be many who will resign themselves, who will be content with the share that will be delivered to them. Immediately say: these are not the mothers. There is one, on the contrary, who will refuse any composition, who will say: the truth belongs to me and I must preserve it entirely, I will never allow it to be diminished, fragmented. Say: this is the real mother.

Yes, Holy Catholic Church, you have the truth, because you have unity, and you are intolerant of letting that unity break down. This, Mr. F., was our first principle: **The religion which descends from heaven is truth, and therefore it is intolerant, as to doctrines. It remains for me to add: The religion which descends from heaven is charity, and consequently it is full of tolerance, as regards persons**. This time again, I will do little more than enunciate and will not undertake the development. Let's breathe for a moment.

II. It is characteristic of the Catholic Church, MF, to be **firm and unwavering in principles**, and to be **gentle and forgiving in their application**. What's amazing? Is she not the bride of Jesus Christ, and, like Him, does she not possess both the intrepid courage of the lion and the peaceful meekness of the lamb? And does it not represent on earth the supreme Wisdom, which strongly tends to its goal and which disposes everything sweetly? Ah! It is by this sign again, it is by this sign above all, that religion descended from heaven must make itself known, it is by the condescensions of its charity, by the inspirations of its love. Now, MF, consider the Church of Jesus Christ, and see with what infinite care, with what respectful consideration she proceeds with her children, whether in the manner in which she presents her teachings to their intelligence, or in the application 'she takes issue with their conduct and their actions. Very soon you will recognize that the Church is a **mother**, who invariably teaches truth and virtue, who can never consent to error or evil, but who strives to make her teaching amiable, and who treats with indulgence the errors of weakness.

Allow me to communicate to you, MF, an impression which is certainly not particular and personal to me, and which has been felt like me by all those of my brothers who have devoted themselves with leisure and reflection to the incomparable study of the sacred science. . From the first steps I was given to take in the domain of holy theology, what caused me the most admiration, what spoke most eloquently to my soul, what would have inspired the faith if I had not had the good fortune to possess it already, it is on the one hand the calm majesty with which the Catholic Church affirms what is certain, and on the other hand the moderation and reserve with which she abandons to free opinions all that is not defined. No, it is not thus that men teach the doctrines of which they are the inventors, it is not thus that they express the thoughts which are the fruit of their genius.

When a man has created a system, he maintains it with absolute tenacity; he yields neither on one point nor on another. When he has fallen in love with a doctrine issued from his brain, he seeks to make it prevail with empire; do not dispute a single one of his ideas: the one you allow yourself to discuss is precisely the most certain and the most necessary. Almost all the books that have come from the hand of men are imbued with this exaggeration and this tyranny.

Is it literature, history, philosophy, science? each sets himself up as an oracle, does not want to be contradicted in anything; it is a perpetual affirmation; it is a narrow, petty, haughty, absolute criticism. Sacred science, on the contrary, holy Catholic theology, presents an entirely different character. As the Church has not invented the truth, but is only its depositary, one finds neither passion nor excess in its teaching. It pleased the Son of God from the ashes on earth, in whom dwelt the fullness of the truth, it pleased him to reveal clearly certain faces, certain aspects of the truth and to only let others glimpse. The Church pushes its ministry no further, and, content

having taught, maintained, avenged certain and necessary principles, she leaves her children to discuss, to conjecture, to reason freely on doubtful points.

Catholic teaching has been so slandered, MF, men are so accustomed to judging it with their prejudices, that you may hardly believe what I am about to tell you. There is not a single science in the world which is less despotic than sacred science. The deposit of teaching has been entrusted to the Church; but do you know what the Church teaches? a symbol in twelve articles which do not form twelve lines, a symbol composed by the Apostles and which the first two general councils explained and developed by adding a few words which had become necessary.

We Catholics proclaim that the authentic interpretation of Holy Scripture belongs to the Church; now do you know, MF, in relation to how many verses of the Bible the Church has used this supreme right? **The Bible contains about thirty thousand verses**, and the Church has perhaps not defined the meaning of **eighty** of these verses; the rest is left to commentators, and, I may say, to the free examination of the Christian reader, so that, according to the word of Saint Jerome, the Scriptures are a vast field in which the intellect can frolic and delight. , and where it will encounter only a few barriers. here and there around the precipices, and also some fortified places where she can intrench herself and find sure help.

The councils are the principal organ of Christian teaching; now, the Council of Trent wishing to contain in one and the same declaration all the obligatory doctrine, it did not require two pages to contain the most complete profession of faith. And if we study the history of this council, we recognize with admiration that it was equally jealous of maintaining dogmas and respecting opinions; and there is such a word that the assembly of the Fathers rejected and for which they had no rest until they substituted another, because its grammatical meaning seemed to exceed the measure of certain truth and conceal something. thing to the free controversies of the doctors.

Finally, the incomparable Bossuet having countered the calumnies of the Protestants with his famous *Exposition of the Catholic faith*, it happened that this same Church, which was accused of tyrannizing over intelligence, could reduce its definite and necessary truths into a body of doctrine. much less voluminous than were the confessions, synods, and declarations of sects which had rejected the principle of authority and which professed free inquiry.

Now, I repeat, Mr. F., this remarkable phenomenon which is found only in the Catholic Church, this calm jesty in affirmation, this moderation and this reserve in all undefined questions, here, in my opinion, is the sign adorable in which I must recognize the truth from heaven. When I contemplate on the forehead of the Church this conviction reigns and this benign indulgence, I throw myself into her arms and say to her: You are my mother. This is how a mother teaches, without passion, without exaggeration, with calm authority and wise measure.

And this character of the teaching of the Church, you find it in its most eminent doctors, in those whose writings it adopts and authorizes almost without restriction. Augustine undertakes his immortal work of the *City of God* which will be until the end of the ages one of the richest monuments of the Church. He is going to avenge against the calumnies of paganism expiring the holy truths of the Christian faith; he feels the ardor of zeal bubbling within him; but if he has read in the Scriptures that God is truth, he has also read that God is charity: *Deus caritas est* ; he understands that **the excess of truth can become the defect of charity** ; he kneels down and sends towards heaven this admirable prayer: *Mitte, Domine, mitigationes in cor meum, ut charitate veritatis non amittam veritatem charitatis* : Send, Lord, see in my heart the softening, the temperament of your spirit, so that, carried along by the love of truth, I may not lose the truth of love: *Mitte, Domine, mitigationes in cor meum, ut charitate veritatis non amittam veritatem charitatis*. And, at the other end of the chain of holy doctors, hear these beautiful words of the blessed bishop of Geneva: **The truth which is not charitable ceases to be the truth** ; for in God, who is the supreme source of truth, charity is inseparable from truth. So, MF, read Augustine, read Francis de Sales: you will find in their writings the truth in all its purity and, for that very reason, all imprinted with charity and love. O priest of Carthage, illustrious apologist of the first ages, I admire the nerve of your

energetic language, the irresistible power of your sarcasm; but shall I say it? under the bark of your most orthodox writings, I seek the anointing of charity; your incisive syllables do not have the humble and gentle accent of love. I'm afraid you stand for the truth

as one defends a system of one's own, and one day your wounded pride abandons the cause which your **bitter zeal** had supported. Ah! MF, why **Tertullian**, before devoting his immense talent to the service of the gospel, did he not pray to the Lord, like Augustine, to send into his heart the softenings, the temperaments of his spirit?

Love would have kept him in the doctrine. But because he was not in charity, he lost the truth.

And you, O famous apologist of these last days, you whose first writings were hailed by the unanimous applause of all Christians, I will tell you, O great writer, this apparent logic in the embraces of which you want to stifle your adversary, these hurried, multiplied, triumphant reasonings with which you overwhelm, all that leaves me something to be desired; **your zeal resembles hatred, you treat your adversary as an enemy, your impetuous speech has neither the anointing of charity nor the accent of love.** O our unfortunate brother in the sacer doce, why must it be that before devoting your fine talent to the defense of religion, you did not make the prayer of Augustine at the foot of your crucifix? *Mitte, Domine, mitigationes in cor meum, ut charitate veritatis non amittam veritatem charitatis.* More love in your heart, and your intelligence would not have made such a deplorable defection; charity would have kept you in the truth.

And if the Catholic Church, MF, presents to our minds the teaching of the truth with so much care and gentleness, ah! it is with even more condescension and kindness that it applies its principles to our conduct and our actions. Unable to ever endure evil doctrines, the Church is tolerant of people beyond measure. **She never confuses error with the one who teaches it, nor sin with the one who commits it. The error she condemns, but the man she continues to love; she stigmatizes sin, but she pursues the sinner with her tenderness, she aspires to make him better, to reconcile him with God, to restore peace and virtue to his heart.**

She has no respect of persons: for her there is neither Jew, nor Greek, nor barbarian; it does not concern itself with your opinions; it does not ask you if you live in a monarchy or in a republic. You have a soul to save, that's all it needs. Call her, she is yours, she comes with hands full of grace and forgiveness. You have committed more sins than you have hair on your head; that does not frighten her, she effaces everything in the blood of Jesus Christ. Some of her laws are too onerous for you, she agrees to accommodate them to your weakness; their rigor yields to your infirmity, and the oracle of theology, Saint Thomas, lays down the principle that if no one can dispense from the divine law, condescension on the contrary should not be too difficult in the laws of the Church, because of the suavity which forms the basis of his government: *Propter suave regimen Ecclesiae.* Also, MF when the civil law is rigid and inflexible, so the law of the Church is flexible and bendable. What other authority on earth governs, administers like the Church? *Suave regimen Ecclesiae.*

Ah! may the world, which preaches tolerance to us, be as tolerant as we are! We only reject principles, and **the world rejects people.** How often we absolve, and the world continues to condemn! How many times, in the name of God, have we drawn the veil of oblivion over the past, and the world still remembers! What did I say ? the same mouths which reproach us for intolerance, blame us for our too credulous and too easy kindness; and our inexhaustible patience with people is almost as much contested as our inflexibility against doctrines.

MF, don't ask us for tolerance any longer with regard to the doctrine. On the contrary, encourage our solicitude to **maintain the unity of dogma, which is the only bond of peace on earth.** The Roman orator said it: **the union of minds is the first condition of the union of hearts.** And this great man brings into the very definition of friendship unanimity of thought in relation to things divine and human: *Eadem de rebus divinis et humanis cure summa charitate juncta concordia.*

Our society, MF, is prey to a thousand divisions; we complain about it every day. Whence comes this weakening of affections, this cooling of hearts? Ah! MF, how could hearts be brought together, where minds are so far apart? Because each of us isolates himself in his own thought, each of us also shuts himself up in self-love. Do we want to put an end to these innumerable dissidences, which threaten to soon destroy all spirit of family, city and country? Do we no longer want to be strangers to each other, adversaries and almost enemies? Let us return to a symbol, and we will soon find concord and love.

Any symbol concerning things here below is far from us; a thousand opinions divide us and there has been no human dogma for a long time, and I don't know if one will ever be reconstituted among us. Fortunately the religious symbol, the divine dogma has always been maintained in its purity in the hands of the Church, and thereby a precious germ of salvation is preserved for us. The day when all French people say: "I believe in God, in Jesus Christ and in the Church", all hearts will not be long in coming together, and we will find the only truly solid and lasting peace, **that** which Apostle calls **peace in truth.** So be it.